



At Work

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Small crew, big repair, great savings for the City

In early October the Department of Utilities pipeline crew completed a repair of a raw water pipeline, ensuring the necessary supply of source water to the 37th Street Water Treatment Plant. By completing



A gaping hole in raw water main # 1 left the City with a restricted amount of source water flowing to the 37th Street Water Treatment Plant.



Raw water pipeline crew. (Back) Lawrence Collins; (front from lt.) Billy McKinney, Wilson Blunt, Phil Coston, and Bobby Johnson; not pictured, Darryl Anderson and Billy Branch.

this repair themselves instead of hiring a contractor, the pipeline crew also saved the City thousands of dollars.

That's not a bad performance for a seven-man crew that does not normally take on jobs of this magnitude.

Line # 1, a 36-inch concrete raw water main, runs from the Western Branch Pumping Station to the 37th Street Water Treatment Plant. Along with its companion 36-inch main, this pipe carries 21 million gallons of untreated water a day to the plant. In September, however, the main was damaged, leaving only one water main to feed 37th Street and restricting the amount of water supplied to the plant.

Because of that restriction of source water, timely repair of the main was critical. Not only does 37th Street Water Treatment Plant serve one-third of the Norfolk population, it also serves the Norfolk Naval Station, a major customer.

"The restricted water source is enough to serve our customers for a short time," said Billy Branch, Senior Utility Maintenance Supervisor, "but we needed to get the repair done before a spike in water use occurred, like the onset of cold weather,

Savings, from front

when the Naval Station begins to use steam."

A contractor could have completed the repair in a reasonably short period of time, but the base cost would have been an estimated \$100,000.00 with a 25% increase for emergency scheduling. So, the Department decided on an in-house repair job, and the pipeline crew stepped up to the plate.

Because the pipe is old (installed in 1921), special adaptors had to be made for the repair. That took about two-and-a-half weeks. While waiting for the adaptors to be made, the crew took care of pre-repair logistics, like lining up materials and services so the repair would go smoothly. They also located the leak, excavated the area, removed the pipe casing, took out the broken section of pipe and prepared for installation of the adaptors.

"To complicate matters," continued Branch, "the age of the pipe made removing the damaged section a delicate operation. We had to make sure we didn't do any harm to the rest of the pipe."

But all went well, and there was no further damage to the main. Once the adaptors arrived, the repair was completed, the pressure checked and the area restored within 48 hours.

The turnaround time was exceptional. In addition to that, there was no interruption of service to Norfolk water customers, even though service to the water treatment plant was interrupted for three to four hours while the leak was being located.

Total repair time:	3 weeks
Total repair cost:	\$35,000.00

Branch feels added security in the fact that his crew made the repair.

"I know the construction we did was top-notch, because we have interest in the quality. We don't want to lose source water through a leak, and we don't want to have to worry about making the same repair in a few months."

And that attention to quality will save the City even more money down the road.♦



Phil Coston prepares the pipe for the installation of its new specially-made adaptors.

Utilities hosts Safety Fair

On October 20, Norfolk Utilities hosted its 5th Annual Safety Fair at the Utilities Operations Center.

Designed to educate attendees on safety procedures and to expose them to the latest safety equipment, the Safety Fair invited vendors from more than 30 major manufacturers to conduct demonstra-



The Irwin Industrial Tools rep answers question from Utilities employee Al Vines.



Mike Preddy of Stihl Corporation demonstrates the power of the company's newest blowers by suspending a basketball in mid-air.

tions and interact with employees.

Open to all Department of Utilities employees, the City Safety Committee, key personnel in other City departments and representatives from neighboring municipalities, this year's Safety Fair drew nearly 600 visitors. Besides a day for education in safety, it is a networking opportunity for the departments.

The Safety Fair is one way of building on Utilities' outstanding safety record and rewarding employees for their hard work and good performance. The fair also enables the employees to become involved with the department's safety program.♦



Virginia OSHA Compliance Officer Brian Hartman (right) was impressed with this unique aspect of the Utilities safety program. Pictured with Hartman is Utilities Safety Officer John Tokarz.